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Selling of Burma beans.

* 140 Q.—SRI S. B. ADITYAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a penal offence to sell any food article unfit for human consumption;

(b) whether Burma beans is an article of that description;

(c) the quantity of Burma beans imported into this Province;

(d) the name of the poison contained in Burma beans;

(e) the number of cases where poisoning of this kind was suspected, and the places where the cases occurred;

(f) the present stock of Burma beans in the Province;

(g) whether the Government are aware of the names of persons with whom the stocks are lying;

(h) what steps the Government have taken to prevent the said persons passing on the stocks for human consumption; and

(i) whether the Government have taken any, and if so, what steps to prevent further import of Burma beans?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (a) Yes.

" (b) Yes, samples of Burma beans analysed by the Government Analyst and the Public Analyst of the Corporation of Madras have shown the presence in them of poisonous matter.

" (c) The exact quantity is not known.

" (d) ' Hydrogen cyanide '.

" (e) About 82 cases of poisoning suspected to be due to the consumption of these beans have been reported from Virudhunagar, and the districts of Salem, the Nilgiris, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly.

" (f) About 35,000 bags.

" (g) No.

" (h) All Health Officers have been instructed to take action against the sale of Burma beans under section 108 of the Public Health Act.

" (i) The Government of India have been addressed to prohibit the import of the beans and its products into this province."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I ask whether the Government will approach the Government of India for returning these beans to Burma? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Government of India have addressed the Bombay Government. It is reported that people in Bombay Province are consuming these beans without any ill-effects."

SRI C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR :—" Sir, if these beans are considered poisonous for human consumption, they may perhaps be utilized for manuring the soil? "

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THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The beans cannot be used as fertilizers since the cost would be prohibitive."

ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" May I know, Sir, from the Hon. Minister, how many deaths were caused on account of these beans being taken by people in this province? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Six deaths and 82 cases of poisoning were reported."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know whether this Government will bring this matter through the Government of India to the notice of the Burma Government so that the importers of these beans could be compensated for the loss? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I shall have the matter considered, Sir."

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.

Dearness allowance to teachers under private management.

22 *Q.*—SRI A. GOVINDACHARYULU : Will the Hon. the Minister for Education be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that teachers in some schools and colleges under private managements are not getting the dearness allowance at Government rates; and

(*b*) if so, what steps the Government propose to take to see that the teachers under private management get the dearness allowance at Government rates?

A.—(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) It is not possible to compel the managements to grant dearness allowance at Government rates, if their financial position does not permit such payment. In order to afford relief to those teachers who get the allowance at rates lower than those admissible to Government servants in corresponding grades, the Government have undertaken to pay a special grant equal to one half of the difference between the maximum amount of allowance admissible at Government rates and the amount of allowance actually paid by the managements of institutions to the staff and the managements are required to disburse to the staff the amount of allowance due out of this special grant.

The Director of Public Instruction has been authorized to investigate into the financial position of the managements, to satisfy himself whether their financial resources would permit the payment of the allowance at Government rates, and if so to direct them to do so. If even after the issue of such a direction, the managements persist in not paying the allowance at Government rates, the teaching grant payable to the managements will be withheld in full